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RACISM SHAME IN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: PSG, BASAKSEHIR WALK
Players from both teams walk after fourth official describes Turkey's assistant coach, Pierre Webbo, as 'black' in Romanian

UNPRECEDENTED SHOW OF SOLIDARITY
This was the first time that players from both teams walked off, forcing UEFA to suspend the match (it will be completed on Wednesday). After Sebastian Coltescu, the fourth official, used the racist slur, Basaksehir forward Demba Ba asked him for an explanation as to why he used the term. Kylian Mbappe and Neymar joined in a lengthy touchline row

'SAY NO TO RACISM. BLACK LIVES MATTER'
After the incident, both Neymar and Mbappe tweeted to show their support for the assistant coach. "Say no to racism," posted Mbappe while Neymar wrote: "Black Lives Matter"
Sport's European governing body announced an investigation. The remainder of the game will have a new set of officials

1st
THIS IS THE FIRST CHAMPIONS LEAGUE MATCH TO BE SUSPENDED FOR RACISM

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Up to ₹5 lakh fine, 7-year jail term for cow slaughter

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

DESPITE stiff opposition from the Congress and JDS members, the Karnataka Assembly on Wednesday passed the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill, 2020. The Bill seeks a total ban on the slaughter of cows in the state and stringent punishment for those indulging in smuggling, illegal transportation, atrocities on cows and slaughtering them.

Before tabling the Bill, BJP members, wearing saffron shawls, conducted 'Gau puja' inside the Vidhana Soudha. Animal Husbandry Minister Prabhu Chavan tabled the Bill in the afternoon.

Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah raised objection to the Bill not being included in the day's agenda. "When it was decided in the Business Advisory Committee that only an ordinance will be tabled in the House, how can you bring a new Bill? Why spring a surprise?" he questioned. Congress members trooped to the well of the House, forcing an adjournment for some time.

However, BJP members countered the Opposition saying in

APMC BILL GETS COUNCIL NOD

The Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (Regulation & Development) (Amendment) Bill, which was stuck in the Legislative Council during the monsoon session, was passed by the Upper House on Wednesday. The Bill allows farmers to sell their produce anywhere. The Bill was hotly debated for over five hours before it was passed. **DETAILS | P4**

2013, when Congress withdrew the Bill which had been passed by the BJP in 2010, it was done in the same manner.

As per the Bill, 'cattle' is defined as cow, calf of a cow/bull, bullock and he/she buffalo aged below 13 years. Slaughter of cows will be a cognisable offence and attract three to seven years of imprisonment. This apart, the penalty has also been increased. For the first offence, the penalty will be not less than ₹50,000, and may extend up to ₹5 lakh. For the second and subsequent offence, it is not less than ₹1 lakh and can go up to ₹10 lakh. **P4**



Ravi Kumar likely to be new Chief Secretary

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE incumbent Chief Secretary, T M Vijay Bhaskar, is set to retire on December 31. He will most likely be succeeded by P Ravi Kumar, the Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka. Ravi Kumar belongs to the 1984 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and is the second senior most IAS officer of Karnataka cadre after Bhaskar.

"There has been no talk in the government regarding the extension of the tenure of the incumbent Chief Secretary," said placed sources.

Kumar, who enjoys a sound reputation as a bureaucrat and 'team leader', will take on the affairs of Karnataka bureaucracy at a time when the financial health of the State has taken a serious blow because of the pandemic and has adversely impacted tax collection.

"The biggest challenge facing the top bureaucrat would be tax collection, maintaining the fiscal deficit below 3 per cent and ensuring that the State's debt to gross state domestic product does not cross 25 per cent. It is currently at 19 per cent but is bound to go up because of the GDP growth, which is in negative," said official sources. **P7**



Representatives of farmer unions address the media, near the Singhu border in New Delhi on Wednesday | SNEHAN YADAV

Unions reject govt offer, announce scaled-up stir

Centre's 20-page proposal includes amendments to new farm laws; farmers plan to hold nationwide dharna on December 14

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi/Chandigarh

REJECTING a basket of proposals the Centre offered in writing to amend the contentious new farm sector reform laws, farmer unions on Wednesday hardened their stance, demanding their total repeal and announced plans to scale up the protests, including a nationwide dharna on December 14.

A day after representatives of 13 farmer unions met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Centre sent a 20-page proposal on the measures it intended to take to address the misgivings of all stakeholders, including amendments (see box), but embedding the minimum support price mechanism into the law was not on offer. Instead, the Centre offered to give a written assurance on the MSP regime.

A meeting of the united forum of farmer union leaders (Samyukt Kisan Morcha) later rejected the proposals and decided to intensify the protest. As part of the plan, the Delhi-Jaipur and Delhi-Agra highways will be blocked on December 12 to gherao and choke the Capital. On the same day, no toll will be collected across any toll booth in the country, they announced. There was, however, no clarity on how they would enforce their toll-free fiat across the country.

On December 14, they intend to hold a nationwide dharna at the district level, gheraoing BJP offices. They also claimed they will impose an economic boycott on products and services provided by mega corporates led by Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani, including the use of Jio mobiles and petrol pumps owned by the Reliance group.

Darshan Pal, president of the Krishikari Kisan Union, said, "On December 14, farmers of Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand will hold a day's protest at the district headquarters and move towards Delhi. As for farmers in other states, they will start an indefinite strike from that day."

Trashing the proposals put out for the first time in writing by the Centre, farmer leader Prahalad Singh Bharukheda said there is nothing new in them. The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), too, termed them "old proposals dressed up as new". The Shiromani Akali Dal urged the Centre to stop playing games with the farmers and immediately and unconditionally withdraw the three controversial laws.

In the evening, a delegation of five Opposition parties met President Ram Nath Kovind, seeking his intervention to accept the demands of the protesting farmers. The Opposition claimed that they had support of at least 20 different political parties who are against the new farm laws. **P9**

Amit Shah, Tomar explore options

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

UNION Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Wednesday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss the future course of action to end the deadlock with the protesting farmers. Sources privy to the deliberations said they discussed a possible alternative to end the stalemate. Minister of Railways and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal was also present. Jagmohan Singh, general secretary of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (Dakaunda), said farmer leaders were open for dialogue. "We will attend a meeting if the government invites, but our demand should be met. It has become a mass movement. We cannot return to our villages empty-handed," he added.

CENTRE'S OFFER

- Written assurance that MSP system will stay. Farmers want it embedded in the law
- Amending laws to allow states to register private traders working outside mandis; provision to impose cess/fee on them
- Amendments to give farmers option to approach civil courts for dispute resolution
- No loan can be availed for any type of construction done on contracted land. Nor can the sponsor encroach upon such construction after contract ends
- Lease, mortgage or sale of farmers' land prohibited. Land cannot be attached by sponsors
- Concerns on stubble burning to be addressed
- No change in present system of paying electricity bills

AGITATION ROADMAP

- Dec 12:** Protest to make all toll plazas in India toll-free
- Dec 12:** Blocking Delhi-Jaipur and Delhi-Agra highways
- Dec 14:** Dharna at all district headquarters



Regulator asks for more data from Bharat Biotech, SII

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation's subject expert committee on Covid-19 on Wednesday sought more data from Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute on the safety and immunogenicity of their vaccines.

These firms, along with US-based Pfizer, have applied to the CDSCO for emergency use authorization of their vaccines in India. "Today was the first meeting to consider the approvals of the three Covid-19 vaccines but representatives from Pfizer could not participate," a source in the drug regulator told **TNIE**.

The expert panel sought additional information before conclusive recommendation can be made to the Drug Controller General of India, the source said, adding that the matter is still under review.

A health ministry official said many meetings will be held before the committee submits its recommendation, based on which the DCGI will take a final decision.

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is in the final stage of trial in India. Covishield, manufactured by Serum, is also being tested on 1,600 Indians as part of phase-2 and -3 clinical trials.

Meanwhile, two National Health Service workers in the UK experienced severe allergic reactions soon after they took the Pfizer vaccine. **P16**



PANCHAYAT

JOLT FOR CONGRESS

IN RAJASTHAN

The ruling Congress in Rajasthan tasted defeat with the BJP beating it in panchayat elections, an outcome which the winning party on Wednesday called a 'farmers' mandate' amid protests against the Centre's farm laws | **P10**

New wage rules kick in from April, expect big changes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

STARTING April 2021, your social security net is likely to be further strengthened with higher retirement corpus and gratuity payout but your monthly take-home salary may come down.

According to the Centre's proposed compensation rules that are expected to kick in from the next financial year, the allowance component in the salary package cannot be more than 50% of the total compensation.

In other words, basic salary has to be at least 50% of the total pay. So, the employees' contribution towards the provident fund (PF) will go up,

resulting in lower take-home salary. However, this will entail higher gratuity payments and PF money for workers when they retire.

While employees will benefit long-term, firms may have to shell out more money as the rise in basic pay will result in a proportional increase in employer's contribution to the PF as well as gratuity.

The new guidelines are part

of the Wage Code 2019 passed by Parliament last year. The Central Government is expected to notify the final rules after considering feedback from the public.

Officials said the new definition is an attempt to simplify the various regulations related to wages. According to experts, it will also change the way private firms treat employees.

Currently, many private

Employee cost to go up for companies

The new compensation norms could force firms to stop the current practice of structuring pay package with higher allowances to lower social security contributions. With basic pay going up, companies will have to shell out more for their share of PF contribution and gratuity

companies prefer to set basic pay as low as 20% of the total salary with allowances taking bulk of the total salary.

To comply with the new rules, these companies will have to revamp their salary structure by raising the basic pay. According to rules, PF is not compulsory for employees drawing more than ₹15,000 a month. It is voluntary on part of the employer and employee to make PF contributions on actual wages if the salary is more than ₹15,000.

Experts point out that some large companies in the formal sector already keep basic pay at 50%. For those firms, the need for revamping salary structure may not arise.

BRUHAT INDEED

BBMP limits to cover more area, include rich IT pockets

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE BBMP Joint Select Committee, headed by BJP MLA S Raghu, has recommended the inclusion of 1km area beyond the existing BBMP limits encompassing 800 sqkm.

The government is expected to pass a separate BBMP Bill on Thursday. Tabled in the assembly in March, the BBMP Bill was referred to a joint committee after several city MLAs, including those from the BJP, opposed it. The State Government constituted a 20-member Joint Select Committee in August,

headed by BJP MLA Raghu, to look into the BBMP Bill. The panel, which has recommended 243 wards, tabled its report in the assembly on Wednesday.

BJP MLA from Basavangudi Ravi Subramanya, who is part of the committee, said they have recommended expanding the Palike limits to 1 kilometre from the existing BBMP border. These will include IT pockets located outside the existing BBMP limits, like parts of Electronics City, and some IT parks outside Mahadevapura. This is expected to improve the corporation's revenue inflow. **P2**